

**Claims:** I claim:

1. A disposable atmospherically activated thermal acupuncture needle comprising:
  - a) a tubular metal body
  - b) an atmospherically activated exothermic coating
  - c) a packaging container
2. an atmospherically activated exothermic coating according to claim 1, that can be applied to directly to said tubular metal body
3. an atmospherically activated exothermic coating according to claim 1, that can be applied to said tubular metal body before insertion into said packaging container
4. a packaging container according to claim 1, that encloses said acupuncture needle such that said coating is not exposed to atmospheric elements until said packaging container is opened
5. an atmospherically activated exothermic coating according to claim 1, in which when said packaging container is opened, is exposed to atmospheric oxygen such that an oxidation reaction occurs
6. an atmospherically activated exothermic coating according to claim 1, in which when said packaging container is opened, is exposed to atmospheric oxygen such that an exothermic reaction occurs
7. a tubular metal body according to claim 1, through which the heat generated from said exothermic reaction can be transferred to the patient